



Jeannette Lee White

Business owner, entrepreneur. Founder, president and CEO of award winning information technology company, earning the national Entrepreneurial Excellence Award from Working Woman Magazine in 2000

Jeannette Lee White was born in Seoul, South Korea. She moved with her family to Hawaii when she was 12 years-old, and to Bethesda at 14. She worked as a temp while studying at George Washington University. She graduated with a degree in economics with honors from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. in 1983, and became an analyst with the Employee Benefit Research Institute in Washington. She also has received executive education from Dartmouth and completed a YPO/MIT Presidents' Seminar on eBusiness at MIT.

In 1987, she decided to open a company specializing in information technology services. The company, originally named Tasqe Inc., aimed to complete complicated data analysis for government and private-sector clients. White, then, provided IT training for a couple of years, to keep the business going. For the first two years, White did not take salary. She raised business capital from her credit cards, her 401 (k), and by selling her home. What she started from her kitchen table grew quickly. In 1991, the newly named Sytel, turned a profit for the first time. In 1989, Sytel qualified for the Small Business Administration's minority and women's business program. White hired additional skilled technical employees and geared the company toward what she saw as a gigantic gap in the market: integration of disparate systems for government agencies. Sytel opened its headquarters in Bethesda, later opening offices in Rockville, Herndon, Virginia; and Palo Alto, California. Currently, Sytel is an e-business infrastructure service provider that helps clients elevate the performance of their business by leveraging the value of their networks, infrastructure and corporate information assets. Sytel specializes in enterprise network services, including network integration, network management; web integration, enterprise information portals and Intranet development; e-business strategic consulting and directory services. Its clients include the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Air Force and Army, the Department of Justice and others.

Sytel has received numerous other awards and recognitions for high-quality performance and fast growth. Sytel has been named one of the 500 fastest growing companies in America by Inc. Magazine (1994, 1996, 1997, 1998) and among the fastest growing U.S. technology firms (1995-1998). As a 5-time Inc. 500 winner, in 1999, Sytel was one of four companies in the U.S. inducted into Inc.'s Hall of Fame, an honor shared by Microsoft, Domino's Pizza, E*Trade, and others. White has been directly involved in Sytel since its inception. As the company grew, she continued to actively lead the company's activities. Team work, inner strength, vision, strong culture and especially capacity of adaptation seem to be the pillars for the success of Sytel and its founder. "The company has already gone through three big changes, and I have been constantly transforming myself over the past 20 years," White stated to The Washington Post in 2001. "I've transformed myself more than I ever could have imagined was possible." White has been

recognized nationally and locally as a business leader in the Montgomery County community. In 1998, White was selected as the Executive of the Year, by the High Tech Council of Maryland. That same year, she was also given the 1998 Entrepreneurial Award by the Dialogue on Diversity and named among the top entrepreneurs in the county by Success magazine. In 2000, White won a national Entrepreneurial Excellence Award in the field of Innovative Business Strategies category from the Working Woman magazine. In 2001, White was listed as the Washingtonian Magazine's "100 Most Powerful Women in Washington." This list consists of thirteen categories, covering subjects including Religion, Health Care, Education, Legal Authorities and National and Local powers. White was named for her success in the Business category, and shares this honor with First Lady Laura Bush, Lynne Cheney, Sandra Day O'Connor and Senator Hillary Clinton. White was also recognized as the annual honoree by the Boy Scouts of America, Potomac, MD chapter. In addition, White belongs to several community and business organizations. She currently serves on the Governor-appointed Board of the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (Tedco), Board of Trustees of The George Mason University Foundation, and serves on the Board of Directors of the High Tech Council of Maryland. She is also member of the Board of Visitors of the Maryland School of Public Affairs/University of Maryland, and of the Board of Directors for the Greater Washington Board of Trade, the most active business organization for the entire region. White served as a chapter officer of the Young Presidents' Organization, an exclusive organization of 8,500 presidents and CEOs worldwide; and also served as Chairwoman of Montgomery United Way (2000-2001).

White is very active in the business community and the community as a whole. She participates annually in several speaking engagements. She has mentored start-up and emerging small and women-owned businesses, and assisted college-bound, inner-city high school students under a Center for Excellence in Education Initiative. Some of her hobbies are reading, exercising, cooking and golf.

SOURCES:

- www.sytel.com
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- Ellen McCarthy, "A Master of Change and Challenge," The Washington Post (December 25, 2001)